



Institut
Néerlandais

Centre culturel
des Pays-Bas

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UN UNIVERS INTIME

PAINTINGS IN THE FRITS LUGT COLLECTION

1ST MARCH - 27TH MAY 2012



Pieter Jansz. Saenredam (Assendelft 1597 - 1665 Haarlem)
Choir of the Church of St Bavo in Haarlem, Seen from the Christmas Chapel, 1636

The paintings of the Frits Lugt Collection - Fondation Custodia leave their home for the Institut Néerlandais, displaying for the first time the full scope of the collection!

The exhibition *Un Univers intime* offers a rare opportunity to view this **outstanding collection of pictures** (Berchem, Saenredam, Maes, Teniers, Guardi, Largillière, Isabey, Bonington...), **expanded in the past two years with another hundred works.**

The intimate interiors of Hôtel Turgot, home to the Frits Lugt Collection, do indeed keep many treasures which remain a secret to the public.

The exhibition presents this collection which was created gradually, with great passion and discernment, over nearly a century, in a selection of **115 paintings**, including **masterpieces of the Dutch Golden Age**, together with **Flemish, Italian, French and Danish** paintings.

DUTCH OF NOTE An Authoritative Collection for Dutch Art History

There is no doubt that the most famous works in the Frits Lugt Collection are those of the **Dutch Golden Age**. The collection holds a range of pictures to represent every facet of this glorious period: from landscape to portrait, from still life to church interior, from history piece to genre painting. Two acquisitions by late 17th century painters who enjoyed great international success have recently been added to this panorama of artistic creation: the elegant portrait of a girl with astounding curly hair by **Nicolaes Maes** (1634-1693) and *Samson and Dalila* by **Adriaen van der Werff** (1659-1722).

Various works from the collection are often requested for loans to **international exhibitions**. This was the case recently for the paintings by **Nicolaes Berchem** (1620-1683) (fig. 1), **Jan van Ravesteyn** (c. 1572-1657), **Jan Lievens** (1607-1674), **Hendrick Avercamp** (1585-1634) and **Jacob Vrel** (active around 1654 -1670).

The numerous loans reflect the importance that the Frits Lugt Collection has acquired for the understanding and appreciation of Dutch art of the 17th century. The *View of Loenen* (fig. 1) is a remarkable painting by **Nicolaes Berchem**, a painter of Italian-style landscapes; here we have a

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topographical view of a village in the Netherlands. The same goes for the landscape with trees by **Jan Lievens**, a companion of Rembrandt in his early years, of whom very few painted landscapes are known.

Again, the peaceful expanse of water in the *View of a Canal with Sailing Boats and a Windmill* is an exception in the career of **Ludolf Backhuysen**, painter of tempestuous seascapes.



Fig. 1: Nicolaes Berchem, *View of Loenen aan de Vecht, with Kronenburg Castle*, c. 1655-1660

FIRST VIEWING Paintings Unknown to the Public

Art lovers who have taken the guided tour which, once a month, leads visitors through the salons of Hôtel Turgot to experience the passion of the collection in its exquisite surroundings, will be pleased with the opportunity to discover a few new and unknown paintings – recent acquisitions, works kept in storage or hung in rooms closed to the public – which are absent from regular display.

New Acquisitions: the Van Hasselt Set of 19th Century Oil Sketches

In 2010, the Frits Lugt Collection was enhanced with nearly **60 oil sketches on paper from the bequest of Carlos van Hasselt** (1929-2009), former director of the Fondation Custodia. This ensemble, so naturally suited to complete the collection, is a testimony to his delicate taste and personal intuition. The Van Hasselt bequest enriches the 19th-century holdings, especially in the field of French and Danish drawings of landscape.

With a **dynamic acquisition policy in both 2010 and 2011**, sketches were acquired to complete the coherence and emphasize the quality of this

ensemble. *Un Univers intime* now offers **for the first time a selection of this group**, with a colourful evocation of the souq in Algiers (fig. 2) as well as a view of Brittany by **Eugène Isabey** (1804-1886) and *The Santa Scolastica Convent at Subiaco* by **Achille Etna Michallon** (1796-1822), the teacher of Corot.

Among the works of Danish painters – so sadly missed in French public collections – are the views of Italy by **Martinus Christian W. Rørbye** (1803-1848) or **Johan Thomas Lundbye** (1818-1848), and sketches bathed in a Danish light like those of **Vilhelm Kyhn** (1819-1903).



Fig. 2: Eugène Isabey, *The Souq at Algiers, the Dyer's Stall*, 1830

Italian, French & British Paintings

Frits Lugt and his successors formed a collection that reaches far beyond the masterpieces of the Northern school.

The exhibition offers the opportunity to discover the masterpiece of Venetian painter **Francesco Guardi** (1712-1792) and a chance to contemplate the self-portrait of the famous female artist **Sophonisba Anguissola** (around 1535-1625).

The Italian still-lives of **Paolo Porpora** (1617-1673) and **Cristoforo Munari** (1667-1720) will have their counterpart in those of French painters **Jacques Linard** (around 1600-1645) and **Nicolas de Largillière** (1656-1746). Of the latter, the exhibition contains a rare still life (one of his earliest works), testifying to the ambition of the young painter, who sets himself on a par with Zeuxis, the painter of Greek Antiquity who achieved such a degree of illusion that birds came flocking to pick his painted grapes.

From the British school, of which the Fondation Custodia keeps a number of drawings and oil sketches, is a poetic *View of Venice* by **Richard Parkes Bonington** (1802-1828), a painter who died very young, yet had profound influence on the Impressionists.

The Dutch Silver Age & 19th Century

The **Silver Age**, as historians call the Dutch 18th century, is a period less familiar in France. In the exhibition are landscapes and city views, by artists such as **Jan ten Compe** (1713-1761) and Hendrik Pothoven (1725/28-1807).

In the early 19th century, much like their Danish or French colleagues, Dutch painters travelled to Italy. The Prix de Rome, created by Louis Napoléon, brother of the Emperor and King of Holland, was the best encouragement, which befell for example **Josephus Augustus Knip** (1777-1847). From this artist, the Fondation Custodia already possessed works on paper, to which now are added three oil sketches from Italy.

Instead, Dutch landscapes and interiors were popular subjects among the painters of the **Hague School**, contemporaries of the French Impressionists. The exhibition displays works of two main protagonists: **Willem Maris** (1844-1910) and **Jozef Israëls** (1824-1911).

George Hendrik Breitner (1857-1923), first affiliated to the Hague School, later settled in Amsterdam. A painter and photographer, friend of Van Gogh, Breitner is one of the major Dutch artists at the close of the 19th century and certainly the most gifted. *Un Univers intime* seems a truly appropriate title for his painting, recently purchased by the Fondation Custodia, of a *Young Lady in Black Stockings* (fig. 3).



Fig. 3: George Breitner, *Young Lady in Black Stockings*

Flemish Artists in the Frits Lugt Collection

Flemish artists are also remarkably well featured in the Frits Lugt Collection, an ensemble that has never been exhibited before.

The **Brueghel dynasty** is there, with Jan Brueghel the Elder, often known as the “**Velvet Brueghel**” (1568-1625). In his *Visit to the Farm*, he moves away from the landscapes and flower still lifes, which won him so much praise from the papal court, and indulges on a variation on the peasant theme and grisaille technique practiced by his father, Pieter Brueghel the Elder. Is he echoing an existing painting or is this a completely new composition? There is no answer yet to that question, but certainly the work was painted to satisfy the entreaties of collectors pressing him for paintings by his father.



Fig. 4: Jan van Kessel the Elder, *Shell Festoons, Masks and Rosettes*, 1656

The Brueghel dynasty counts more celebrated masters in the 17th century. **Jan van Kessel the Elder** (1626-1679) was the grandson of the “Velvet” Brueghel and won early fame with his precious still lifes. The Frits Lugt Collection boasts three of his paintings on copper; these *Shell Festoons and Masks* (fig. 4) with decorative and anthropomorphic motifs has no equal in the painters’ oeuvre.

Twenty-five Flemish paintings are displayed in the exhibition, but a painting by **David Teniers the Younger** (1610-1690) provides an eloquent example. A far cry from the peasant scenes and smoke dens that usually adorn French museums, the exhibition presents an aspect often less well-known, yet essential in his career, in his *Adoration of the Shepherds*. Teniers, to whom the archduke Leopold Wilhelm von Habsburg, governor of the Netherlands, entrusted his collection in Brussels, was actually one of the first curators in history; among his initiatives was the publication of an illustrated catalogue of the collection. The Fondation Custodia’s *Adoration of the Shepherds* is a sketch executed after Andrea Schiavone (c. 1510-1563) for one of the prints included in Teniers’ *Theatrum pictorum*, published in 1659.

CONSERVATION WORK And New Period Frames

In preparation for the exhibition *Un Univers intime*, quite a few paintings were put into the care of restaurers, a process that provides a close and fresh view of the works. From Rembrandt’s teacher Pieter Lastman (1583-1633) there is an important painting: *The Baptism of the Eunuch* (fig. 5). Careful and complex conservation helped to bring back the artist’s characteristic vivid colours, which Rembrandt imitated in the beginning of his career. The iconographical theme of ‘The Baptism of the Eunuch’ (Acts 8:26-40) was treated by Lastman on more than one occasion and also figures in three early works by Rembrandt.

Other notable pictures that have recently been restored include landscapes by **Jan van Goyen** (1596-1656) and **Pieter Post** (1608-1669), and church interiors by **Emmanuel de Witte** (1617-1692) and **Pieter Saenredam** (1597-1665).

We also took the opportunity to seek and find the **period frames, Dutch or Flemish**, that are truly fitting for some of these important paintings, made in view of their display in contemporary frames.



Fig. 5: Pieter Lastman, *The Baptism of the Eunuch*

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Exhibition title

Un Univers intime

The Paintings of the Frits Lugt Collection

Exhibition dates

1st March – 27th May 2012

Opening hours

Tuesdays to Sundays, from 1 pm to 7 pm

OPENING

Press visit

≥ Wednesday 29 February from 12 pm to 2 pm

Public opening

≥ Wednesday 29 February from 6 pm to 8.30 pm

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Transportation

≥ Metro 12: Assemblée Nationale

Metro 8/13: Invalides

≥ RER C: Musée d'Orsay

≥ Bus: 63, 83, 84, 94, 72

Admission

≥ Adults 6 €, Discount 4 €,

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Visuals for the press

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from our press contacts (details above).

Background Information:

The Frits Lugt Collection, Fondation Custodia and the Institut Néerlandais in Paris

The Frits Lugt Collection in Paris is a remarkable ensemble of drawings (Da Vinci, Van Dyck, Rembrandt, Watteau, Rubens, Guercino, etc.), prints, old books, paintings and artists' letters (Michelangelo, Ingres, Manet, Mondrian, etc., in excess of 50,000 autographs). The best part of these holdings was brought together by Frits Lugt, who was an accomplished connoisseur.

By transferring their possessions and capital to Fondation Custodia in 1947, Frits Lugt (1884-1970) and his wife Jacoba Klever (1888-1969) ensured their collection would last beyond their lifetime. To the present, it is continuously expanding, with each new acquisition offering a broader or richer perspective into a specific domain or one of the artists represented in the collection.

The Frits Lugt Collection is housed in the Hôtel Turgot. There, within the walls of this 18th-century *hôtel particulier*, the last residence of Louis XVI's famous minister of finance, scholars are welcome to view and examine this outstanding collection by appointment in the study room – often rated the most beautiful in the world.

The adjacent Institut Néerlandais had Frits Lugt as one of its founders. Since its creation in 1956, its work is pursued in close collaboration with Fondation Custodia, which presents its ancient art exhibitions at the cultural institute of the Netherlands.

Paintings from the Frits Lugt Collection Recently on Loan to Exhibitions:

Nicolaes Berchem. In the Light of Italy, Haarlem (Frans Halsmuseum), Zürich (Kunsthaus), Schwerin (Staatliches Museum) 2006-2007 (painting by N. Berchem)

Dutch Portraits. The Age of Rembrandt and Frans Hals, Londres (National Gallery), The Hague (Mauritshuis) 2007 (painting by Jan van Ravesteyn)

Jan Lievens. A Dutch Master Rediscovered, Washington (National Gallery of Art), Milwaukee (Milwaukee Art Museum), Amsterdam (Rembrandthuis) 2009 (painting by J. Lievens)

Hendrick Avercamp. Master of the Ice Scene, Amsterdam (Rijksmuseum), Washington (National Gallery of Art) 2009-2010 (painting by H. Avercamp)

Vermeer's Women. Secret and Silence, Cambridge (Fitzwilliam Museum), 2011-2012 (painting by Jacob Vrel)

VISUALS FOR THE PRESS

These pictures are available on request from our press contacts (see page 5). Images can only be used for editorial purpose concerning exhibitions of Fondation Custodia in the Institut Néerlandais.

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1. Nicolaes Berchem
(Haarlem 1620 - 1683 Amsterdam)
View of Loenen on the Vecht, with Cronenburgh Castle, c. 1655-1660
91,3 x 114,5 cm; inv. 6811



2. Jan van Ravesteyn
(The Hague c. 1572 - 1657 The Hague)
Portrait of Hugo Grotius at the Age of Sixteen, 1599
diameter: 31 cm; inv. 175



3. Jacob Vrel (active c. 1654 - 1670?)
Woman at a Window, Waving at a Girl, c. 1650
45,7 x 39,2 cm; inv. 174



4. Ludolf Backhuysen
(Emden 1630 - 1708 Amsterdam)
Ships on a Canal with a Windmill
41 x 38 cm; inv. 1919



5. Pieter Lastman
(Amsterdam 1583 - 1633 Amsterdam)
The Baptism of the Eunuch
63 x 99 cm; inv. 4886



8. Francesco Guardi (Venice 1717 - 1792 Venice)
San Giorgio Maggiore Seen from the Giudecca, in Venice
48 x 66 cm; inv. 2389



6. Nicolaes Maes
(Dordrecht 1634 - 1693 Amsterdam)
Portrait of a Girl
58 x 49 cm; inv. 2011-S.3



9. Nicolas de Largillière (Paris 1656 - 1746 Paris)
Two Bunches of Grapes, 1677
24,5 x 34,5 cm; inv. 6062



7. Pieter Jansz. Saenredam (Assendelft 1597 - 1665 Haarlem), *Choir of the Church of St Bavo in Haarlem, Seen from the Christmas Chapel*, 1636
48,8 x 36,5 cm; inv. 396



10. Jan Brueghel the Elder (Brussels 1568 - 1625 Antwerp)
The Visit to the Tenant Farmer
28,5 x 42,7 cm; inv. 431



11. Jan van Kessel the Elder (Antwerp 1626 - 1679 Antwerp), *Shell Festoons, Masks and Rosettes*, 1656; 40 x 56 cm; inv. 5824



14. George Breitner (Rotterdam 1857 - 1923 Amsterdam), *Young Lady in Black Stockings* 20 x 30 cm; inv. 2011-S.19



12. David Teniers the Younger (Antwerp 1610 - 1690 Brussels), *Adoration of the Shepherds*, after Andrea Mantegna 31,2 x 21,2 cm; inv. 5796



15. Eugène Isabey (Paris 1804 - 1886 Paris) *The Souq at Algiers, the Dyer's Stall*, 1830 28,8 x 24,5 cm; inv. 2011-S.10



13. Jan ten Compe (Amsterdam 1713 - 1761 Amsterdam) *View of Cleves with a Draftsman* 31 x 38 cm; inv. 6489 B



16. Martinus Christian W. Rørbye (Drammen 1803 - 1848 Copenhagen) *The Hunter's Den, Cervara*, 1835 20 x 31 cm; inv. 2011-S.1